

Symbolic frame in hy- vee and drugtown store



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This report applies the viewpoints of Structure Theory and Symbolic Frame to Vredenburg and Hyde, Inc. in which Hy-Vee Food and Drugtown Store were merged into a single organization in 1996. The businesses previously had been in the structural form of a machine bureaucracy which following the merger, were combined into a divisionalized form. The company was divided into a food and non-food division, both of which shared a 70, 000 square feet building with several additional departments. The report first describes the general background of company, and raises some issues through anonymous questionnaire.

Then the report examines the structural frame, which is used to analyze problems. On the basis of structure theory, it provides some solutions to the problems. Following this, the main part of the paper examines the symbolic frame. In it, organizational rituals, organizational symbols and organizational culture are reviewed. Again, it also addresses several solutions to the problems taking place in the organization as well as structural frame. At last, the report then discusses why both solutions are different to each other. Hy-Vee Food and neighboring Drugtown Store (located 250 feet directly east) were located in Iowa City, USA.

In 1996, these two divisions were combined into a single Hy-Vee, under only one name (Hy-Vee and Drug Store). The old Hy-Vee employed a total of 130 employees; it had occupied a 30, 000 square feet facility for 16 years. The Hy-Vee Food and Drugtown Store merged because of company's modern 'store of future' concept that places a strong focus on freshness, variety and one-stop shopping, and that 'combo' stores are popular in the industry. In

the new store, the organization would be combined into a divisionalized form, especially under only the Hy-Vee name (Hy-Vee 2002).

Therefore, after the merger there were a number of concerns, fears and ambiguities present among groups of employees who staffed the Hy-Vee Food and Drugtown Store because historically, the Hy-Vee and Drugtown employees had little interaction although both of them belonged to one company. For more details about Hy-Vee, see appendix. After researching and analyzing, some questions were raised in order to evaluate the general feelings, concerns and expectations among management and employees of both organizations at all levels about the coming structural change of their place of employment.

For looking insight into these issues, this report focuses on the structure theory. Its main features and applications to the analysis of the given organization will be demonstrated. At first, structure theory was most fully developed by Jeffery Pfeffer and Gerald Salancik who published their ideas in 1978. The organization used to separate into two departments, one for Food and another one for Drug Store, so there is a little interaction between these two department's employees although both of them are worked under the same company.

The traditional management is bureaucratic, which organizational design involves domination in the sense that authority involves the legitimate right to exact obedience from others. All tasks will be divided into highly specialized jobs, management can hold them responsible for the effective performance of their duties. Employment in the organization is viewed as a

lifelong career, and a high degree of loyalty is engendered. Once, the company also tried to attract and retain all best employees for the long term employed by established 25 percent of the company's net profits to the trust fund for all full time employees.

The overall information flows mainly in a vertical direction down a clearly defined hierarchy, the role are also clearly defined. Each employee is individually specialized and knows exactly what to do and responsible for. At the functional level, all functions are worked separately, the organization almost faced stable and unchanging environments, as the employees worked in routine and follow the same processes (Gibson, Ivancevich & Donnelly 2000).